

*Appl. No. 09/986,398
Supplemental Response dated April 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2003*

*Docket No. 0630-1349P
Group Art Unit 2817
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REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-14 and 16-20 are pending. Claims 1 and 18 are independent. Claim 16 is amended to correct a minor informality. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Examiner Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative, Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786, during the telephonic interview which was conducted on March 26, 2004. During the interview, the Examiner and the Applicants' Representative discussed changes to the claims and the specification which the Examiner indicates are needed in order to place the application in condition for allowance. As the Examiner will note, amendments as discussed have been made to dependent claim 16 as well as to the specification. It is now believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Substitute Specification

In accordance with MPEP §608.01(q), Applicants herewith submit a substitute specification in the above-identified application. Also included is a marked-up copy of the original specification which shows the portions of the original specification which are being added and deleted. Applicants respectfully submit that the substitute specification includes no

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new matter and that the substitute specification includes the same changes as are indicated in the marked-up copy of the original specification showing additions and deletions.

Because the number of amendments which are being made to the original specification would render it difficult to consider the case, or to arrange the papers for printing or copying, Applicants have voluntarily submitted this substitute specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the substitute specification be entered into the application.

This application is now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Substitute Specification (both clean and marked-up copies)

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